

The Rapture of the Church **(May 2, 2020 by Rev. Anthony Menzel)**

One of our leaders, Sister Lorena Ramos, received a message this week from the Lord...

I am going to translate it for you now from Spanish...

Based on this message from the Lord, I felt led by the Holy Spirit to preach on the Rapture today...

We may or may not be here for the end of the world, but it is very possible that we may in fact be the last generation...

As we mentioned last week, the Good News about Jesus Christ has been preached almost everywhere, if not everywhere...

With the Internet and cell phones, the sharing of the Word is happening faster than ever before...

Scripture 1: Matthew 24:3-14

¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

Scripture 2: Daniel 12:4

⁴ "But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase."

The Rapture of the Church is a promise the Lord Jesus gives in the Bible to take faithful Christians home before the Antichrist takes over the world. At that point, the devil will have complete control over the earth for 3.5 years:

Scripture 3: Revelation 13:1-8, 11-18

Then ^[a]I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having ^[b]seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. ² Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like *the feet of a bear*, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. ³ And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly

wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. ⁴ So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who *is* like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?”

⁵ And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to ^[c]continue for forty-two months. ⁶ Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. ⁷ It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every ^[d]tribe, tongue, and nation. ⁸ All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

¹¹ Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. ¹² And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. ¹³ He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. ¹⁴ And he deceives ^[f]those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. ¹⁵ He was granted *power* to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. ¹⁶ He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, ¹⁷ and that no one may buy or sell except one who has ^[g]the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

¹⁸ Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number *is* 666.

Approximately 2/7 Christians will be taken in the Rapture:

The seven churches mentioned in Revelation 2 and 3 represent historical churches, but on another level of Biblical interpretation, they also represent not only different types of churches but also different types of Christians:

Many Bibles have added subtitles that summarize what type of church or Christian each of these churches represents:

- 1) Ephesus-loveless
- 2) Smyrna-persecuted
- 3) Pergamos-compromising
- 4) Thyatira-corrupt
- 5) Sardis-dead
- 6) Philadelphia-faithful
- 7) Laodicea-lukewarm

We see that two types of Christians are promised to be spared from the rule of the Antichrist:

Scripture 4: Revelation 2:8-10

⁸“And to the [d]angel of the church in Smyrna write,

‘These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: ⁹“I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a [e]synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Scripture 5: Revelation 3:7-10

⁷“And to the [e]angel of the church in Philadelphia write,

‘These things says He who is holy, He who is true, “He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens”: ⁸“I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, [f]and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. ⁹ Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. ¹⁰ Because you have kept [g]My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

The term “Rapture,” like the term “Trinity,” is not in the Bible, but we see both of these concepts clearly taught in the Word of God:

Scripture 6: 1 John 5:7-8

⁷ For there are three that bear witness [b]in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. ⁸ And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.

This is one of the passages that clearly shows that Our God is one God in three persons...

Now we will study more about the Rapture...

Scripture 7: Matthew 24:36-44

³⁶ “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of [f]heaven, but My Father only. ³⁷ But as the days of Noah *were*, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ³⁸ For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰ Then two *men* will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹ Two *women* will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴² Watch therefore, for you do not know what [g]hour your Lord is coming. ⁴³ But know this, that if the master of the house had known what [h]hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Here we see the idea of being “taken,” while others remain.

Scripture 8: 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18

¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are [d]asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

This experience of being “caught up” is something that will occur before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to reign on the earth.

The following passage shows us how it will be when the Lord Jesus comes back to reign on the earth...

Scripture 9: Revelation 19:11-21

¹¹ Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He ^[e]had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³ He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies in heaven, clothed in ^[f]fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵ Now out of His mouth goes a ^[g]sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶ And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written:

KING OF KINGS AND
LORD OF LORDS.

The Beast and His Armies Defeated

¹⁷ Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, “Come and gather together for the ^[h]supper of the great God, ¹⁸ that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all *people*, ^[i]free and slave, both small and great.”

¹⁹ And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. ²⁰ Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. ²¹ And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

This great battle will be at Armageddon, also known as Mount Megiddo, in the Middle East.

<https://www.americaisraelstours.com/israel-travel-guide/tiberias-galilee/visit-tiberias-galilee/valley-of-armageddon>: As told in the Bible, this place, the Jezreel Valley, will take center stage pass Armageddon or the final battle between the forces of light, directed by Jesus Christ, and of darkness, led by Satan or the Antichrist (Revelation 16:16, Revelation 19:11.) The word Armageddon comes from the Hebrew expression meaning Mount Megiddo. While there is not a mountain called Mount Megiddo, there is a mount created by the accumulation of different layers of archaeological remains in the ancient city of Megiddo. The mount of Megiddo is located on a plain famous for its historic battles, such as Megiddo and two more in the years 609 A.C. and the battle fought between England and the Ottoman Empire in 1918.

Scripture 10: Revelation 16:13-16

¹³ And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *coming* out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. ¹⁴ For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, *which* go out to the kings ^[g]of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

¹⁵ “Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed *is* he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.”

¹⁶ And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, ^[h]Armageddon.

Scripture 11: Revelation 20:1-6

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ² He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³ and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

The Saints Reign with Christ 1,000 Years

⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then *I* saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their

witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for ^[a]a thousand years. ⁵ But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy *is* he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Those who leave with the Lord Jesus in the Rapture, prior His Second Coming to reign on the earth, will not be beheaded unless they die from that type of persecution...

The mark of the beast will not be implemented until after the Rapture has occurred...

Just to bring clarity, the Final Judgment will occur following this Millennial Reign of Christ on the Earth...

Scripture 12: Revelation 20:7-15

⁷ Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number *is* as the sand of the sea. ⁹ They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰ The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where^[b] the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

The Great White Throne Judgment

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before ^[c]God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were

cast into the lake of fire. This is the second [d]death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Then the new heaven and earth will come into existence...

Scripture 13: Revelation 21:1-4

Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ² Then I, [a]John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. ⁴ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

As we think about the Rapture, we should not just want to be right with the Lord Jesus so that we can go with Him in the Rapture. We should also remember that if we are not the last generation, we still should always be prepared to go home to be with the Lord Jesus...

Scripture 14: Luke 12:13-21

¹³ Then one from the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

¹⁴ But He said to him, "Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?" ¹⁵ And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of [c]covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."

¹⁶ Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. ¹⁷ And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' ¹⁸ So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, *and be* merry.'" ²⁰ But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?'

²¹ "So *is* he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

Being rich toward God is simple to understand but often hard to apply:

Scripture 15: Micah 6:6-8

With what shall I come before the LORD,

And bow myself before the High God?

Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings,

With calves a year old?

⁷ Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,

Ten thousand rivers of oil?

Shall I give my firstborn *for* my transgression,

^[c] The fruit of my body *for* the sin of my soul?

⁸ He has shown you, O man, what *is* good;

And what does the LORD require of you

But to do justly,

To love ^[d] mercy,

And to walk humbly with your God?

I could get into a deep interpretation of these Scriptures, regarding being rich toward God, but To love mercy can basically be summed up into the Golden Rule:

Scripture 16: Matthew 7:12

¹² Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.